

Opening Statement of Chairman Ed Whitfield
Energy and Power Subcommittee
Markup of H.R. 2681, the Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act of 2011, and H.R. 2250, the
EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011, and H.R. 2937, the Pipeline Infrastructure and
Community Protection Act of 2011
September 20, 2011
(As Prepared for Delivery)

Thank you Chairman Upton for moving H.R. 2681, the Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act, and H.R. 2250, the EPA Regulatory Relief Act, which I will refer to as the cement and boiler bills, as well as H.R. 2937, the Pipeline Infrastructure and Community Protection Act of 2011 through the Full Committee.

I am pleased that all three of the bills being considered today carry bipartisan support and are common-sense approaches that set us on a path toward environmental quality, economic security, and additional infrastructure security.

The first bill, the Cement MACT bill, requires the agency to set new emissions limits from cement manufacturing plants that are reasonable and achievable. The legislation legislatively stays rules that have been issued by EPA that threaten to shutdown up to 18 cement plants in America or more in the coming years, and would force us to import more cement from China and other countries to build our roads, bridges, and tunnels. I mentioned in the subcommittee that it was ironic that President Obama would advocate for more infrastructure spending on the one hand while his EPA makes it more difficult to produce the product needed to do the work.

The second bill, the boiler bill, addresses EPA rules that set new and for many boilers unachievable standards and would apply to a very wide variety of facilities across the nation – not just manufacturers and industrial facilities, but also colleges and universities, hospitals, municipal buildings, and commercial properties, which would result in higher costs for manufactured goods as well as things like medical bills, tuition, and rent.

The boiler bill requires EPA to re-propose its boiler rules so as to ensure that be both technologically achievable and economically sensible.

Both of these bills restore the balance between our nation's economic and environmental goals. The last bill we will be considering is the Pipeline Safety bill. In the subcommittee, I applauded Chairman Upton and Chairman emeritus Dingell for crafting a good product, but asked that they work with me to modify the one-call provision to ensure that it does not have unintended consequences.

I am pleased that the manager's amendment that we will be considering incorporates my comments to ensure that we pursue pipeline safety, without unduly impacting railroads, cities, and farmers and ranchers that do routine maintenance on their property. Thank you Chairman Upton and Chairman Emeritus Dingell for your help on this matter.

Again, I am very encouraged by the fact that all three of these bills carry bipartisan support. I urge all Members of the Committee to support these bills and I yield back the balance of my time.